segment higher import is largely due to cashew nuts, which is mainly imported for processing and re-export. The growth in import of milk and milk products is largely accounted for by butter oil.

Import of these items is permissible as per Exim Policy and Procedures laid down in the Handbook of Procedure. The quantitative restrictions, which were earlier maintained on balance of payment grounds, have been removed in line with the economic liberalization policy and also in accordance with the country's commitment to multilateral trading regime.

Tea Export

1080. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity of tea exported during the last three years year-wise; and

(b) the details of steps being taken to increase export of tea to Russia?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY): (a) The details of export of tea in quantity terms during the last three years year-wise is given below:

Period	Quantity (Million Kgs.)
2000	206.82
2001	182.59
2002	193.03*

*Estimated and subject to revision

(b) Government has taken various steps to improve and sustain the export of tea to major tea importing countries including Russia and the Tea Board is also implementing a medium term export strategy for the same. The steps taken include providing financial incentives to the exporters for meeting part of the cost of handling packaging transport/ freight charges, implementing schemes for quality upgradation of tea, programmes on building consumer awareness of speciality Indian teas in select markets, participation in major trade fairs/exhibitions abroad, media

campaigns, exchange of tea delegations between India and tea importing countries etc. The additional steps taken specifically for Russia include launching of a major media campaign in October 2002 in Russia with a revamped 'India Tea' logo, formulation of a voluntary scheme on quality assurance towards export of tea to Russia providing incentives for production of orthodox tea since the market trends have shifted from CTC (Cut-tear-curl) to orthodox tea in Russia etc.

Decline in Export of Tea

1081. SHRI C.O. POULOSE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the export of tea from the country during the year 2002 fell by 6 percent;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the impact of this decline on the tea producing areas along with the details of loss in terms of foreign exchange earnings; and

(d) the steps taken to improve the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY): (a) to (d) The export of tea during 2002 has increased by 10.44 million kgs. over 2001, representing an increase of 5.72%. However, due to a lower unit export price realization, the value of tea exports has declined thereby leading to a decline in foreign exchange earnings. The export of tea in quantity and value terms during the last two years is given below:

Year	Quantity (Million kgs.)	Value (Rs. Crores)
2001	182.59	1682.11
2002*	193.03	1633.48

*Estimated & subject to revision.

In order to boost exports of tea, Tea Board is implementing a medium term export strategy formulated through a private consultancy firm.